

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A cross beam assembly ~~extending between side frame members of a vehicle, said cross beam assembly~~ comprising:

an air bag expandable from a folded condition to an expanded condition;

a beam having a hollow interior, said beam defining an opening formed therein;

and

an inflator assembly including a source of pressurized gas for inflating said ~~an~~ air bag, said inflator assembly disposed within the hollow interior of said beam, such that activation of said inflator assembly expels gas through said opening, wherein said inflator assembly is integrally formed in said beam such that a portion of said beam defines walls of said inflator assembly; and

a chute connected to said beam, said chute having a passageway in communication with said opening formed in said beam, said chute extending outwardly from said beam for directing expelled gas from said source of pressurized gas to said air bag upon actuation of said inflator assembly, wherein said air bag is disposed in said chute when in the folded condition.

2. (Original) The assembly of claim 1, wherein said beam has a generally constant cross-sectional area along substantially the entire length of the beam.

3. (Currently amended) The assembly of claim 2, wherein said beam includes a strengthening member defining a sleeve which is disposed over said beam and attached thereto, said strengthening member attached to a portion of said beam adjacent to said inflator assembly.

4. (Currently amended) The assembly of claim 1, wherein said beam includes a strengthening member defining a sleeve which is disposed over said beam and attached thereto, said strengthening member attached to a portion of said beam adjacent to said inflator for providing added strength to said beam.

Claims 5-8 (Cancelled)

9. (Currently amended) The assembly of claim 1 ~~claim 8~~, wherein said ~~cross~~ beam includes a pair of walls disposed in said hollow interior of said to beam, and wherein said walls and said hollow interior of said ~~cross~~ beam define a chamber for housing said source of pressurized gas.

10. (Currently amended) The assembly of claim 9, wherein one of said walls is attached to said ~~cross~~ beam by a crimp formed in said ~~cross~~ beam.

11. (Currently amended) The assembly of claim 9, wherein one of said walls is attached to said ~~cross~~ beam by a weld.

Claims 12 and 13 (Cancelled)

14. (Currently amended) The assembly of claim 1 ~~claim 13~~, wherein said chute partially surrounds said ~~cross~~ beam.

Claims 15 and 16 (Cancelled)

17. (Original) The assembly of claim 12 further including an inflatable air bag and a door for covering said air bag in a non-deployed state, said door movable to deployed position upon actuation of said inflator to inflate said air bag, wherein said door is attached to said chute.

18. (Original) The assembly of claim 17, wherein said door is integrally formed with said chute.

19. (Original) The assembly of claim 1, wherein said source of pressurized gas is a solid propellant.

20. (Canceled).

21. (New) A cross beam assembly comprising:

an air bag expandable from a folded condition to an expanded condition;

a beam having a hollow interior, said beam defining an opening formed therein;

an inflator assembly including a source of pressurized gas for inflating said air bag, said inflator assembly disposed within the hollow interior of said beam, such that activation of said inflator assembly expels gas through said opening;

a chute connected to said beam, said chute having a passageway in communication with said opening formed in said beam, said chute extending outwardly from said beam for directing expelled gas from said source of pressurized gas to said air bag upon actuation of said inflator assembly, wherein said air bag is disposed in said chute when in its folded condition; and

a door for covering said air bag when in its folded condition in said chute, said door being integrally formed with said chute, said door being movable to a deployed position upon actuation of said inflator to inflate said air bag.

22. (New) The assembly of claim 21, wherein said inflator includes a separate canister housing mounted within said hollow interior of said beam, said canister housing including apertures formed therein for permitting gases to be expelled therethrough upon actuation of said inflator.

23. (New) The assembly of claim 21, wherein said inflator assembly is integrally formed in said beam such that a portion of the beam defines walls of said inflator assembly containing the source of pressurized gas.

24. (New) The assembly of claim 21, wherein said beam includes a strengthening member defining a sleeve which is disposed over said beam and attached thereto, said strengthening member attached to a portion of said beam adjacent to said inflator assembly.

25. (New) A cross beam assembly comprising:

an elongated beam having a hollow interior and a plurality of openings formed therein in communication with said interior, said openings being substantially smaller than a width of said beam, said beam being generally straight along the length of the beam and adapted to be connected between side frame members of a vehicle, said beam having a generally constant cross-sectional shape along its length; and

an inflator assembly including a source of pressurized gas for inflating an air bag, said inflator assembly being disposed within the hollow interior of said beam such that activation of said inflator assembly expels gas through said plurality of openings.

26. (New) The assembly of claim 25, wherein said inflator includes a separate canister housing mounted within said hollow interior of said beam, said canister housing including apertures formed therein for permitting gases to be expelled therethrough upon actuation of said inflator.

27. (New) The assembly of claim 25, wherein said inflator assembly is integrally formed in said beam such that a portion of the beam defines walls of said inflator assembly containing the source of pressurized gas.